

File Copy

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET				
SUBJECT: (Optional) Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau				
FROM: Chief, Operations Group		EXTENSION	NO.	
			DATE February 1988	
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
	RECEIVED	FORWARDED		
1. C/MOD				
2.				
3. C/ESG				
4.				
5. C/FED				
6.				
7. C/ADD				
8.				
9. C/HED				
10.				
11. C/Computer Operations				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15. Retain/Destroy				

STAT

FBI6-4805-88
8 March 88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau -- February 1988

I. GENERAL

At a meeting at month's end with the Architect and Quantity Surveyor we were informed that it would be another 4-6 weeks before the Quantity Surveyor would be able to complete his analysis of the final settlement of the contract for our new bureau and the contractor's claim for an extension of time. As before, the continuing delay is the result of the contractor's inability or refusal to provide the Quantity Surveyor with detailed records to support his claims. The Quantity Surveyor has written the contractor that he cannot sit on the issue indefinitely; that the analysis will be wrapped up without his input to his detriment if he cannot or will not provide the required supporting documentation. Patience continues to be the byword.

The presidential campaign in Cyprus culminated this month with the replacement of two-term President Spiros Kiprianou by an independent candidate, Yeoryios Vasilou, backed by the communist party, AKEL. The incumbent was defeated in the first round elections on 14 February after weeks of intense electioneering across the island by the five contenders. In the run-off polling on the following Sunday, 21 February, Vasilou narrowly defeated conservative Glavkos Kliridhis. While Vasilou's platform promised greater flexibility in dealing with the Turkish Cypriot leadership to try to find a solution to the division of the island, the early statements by the newly elected president and ripostes from the Turkish side showed little sign of change in old entrenched positions on the issues. To cover the election, the bureau extended its operating hours on the nights of both votes to report on early returns until a clear trend was established. Then the bureau opened early the morning following both votes to provide the final results and to process victory and concession statements by the candidates.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Bureau coverage of disturbances in Soviet Armenia, and later Azerbaijan, from Baku and Yerevan radios elicited several expressions of appreciation from the BBC and Headquarters. The BBC Newsroom described the Nicosia coverage as a "goldmine" of unique coverage and indicated they were "especially appreciative of (Nicosia's) fast processing and filing." Newsroom head Callum Mackechnie specially acknowledged the contributions of Nicosia Chief Monitor [redacted] and Senior Persian Monitor [redacted] for stepping in quickly to take over unaccustomed duties monitoring and processing Russian and Armenian, respectively. Chief, Operations Group praised the bureau's "outstanding performance these past two weeks." The Wire Service also sent a message of appreciation.

STAT
STAT

Maria was recalled to duty late on a day off on 24 February to start an open-speaker watch of Yerevan Domestic Service, following reports of demonstrations there, even though her Armenian capability was rusty and she had not previously used the language in monitoring work. Nicosia provided the only FBIS coverage of the primary sources, because the BBC could hear only a few International Service casts from the area and was unable for the first few days to contact its sole Armenian monitor, who was on leave. Nicosia also laid-on coverage of Yerevan International Service in Arabic, Persian, and Russian and increased its coverage of Baku Domestic Service in Azeri. Yerevan was recorded during Maria's off-duty hours for delayed checking. The BBC assisted by assuming coverage of Nicosia's two regular Tehran radio morning programs. This ad hoc coverage resulted in a steady stream of radio behavior FYI's, responses to BBC and Wire Service alerts on serious developments, and texting of many immediate-precedence reports and speeches from all of the languages being covered.

When it became clear that the crisis could be protracted, the BBC arranged to send its Armenian monitor -- old Kyrenia hand Mark Sarafyan -- to Nicosia on TDY. He arrived on 27 February and went to work immediately the next morning, allowing Maria to return to Persian coverage. He took over the schedule already established of live coverage for two periods each day, in the morning and evening, and also took over timely coverage of important items in the Azeri language. On this basis, intense coverage of Armenian developments continued into March.

2. The island of Cyprus, reputedly a favorite gathering place for terrorists but rarely the site of their operations, experienced two violent incidents this month. In the port city of Limassol three Palestinians -- later identified as senior Fatah officials -- were killed by a car bomb on 14 February. A PLO spokesman in Athens accused Israeli intelligence of carrying out the bombing, and the Israeli Embassy in Nicosia released a statement denying involvement, saying that "Israel has always fully respected the territorial integrity of Cyprus."

Israel was also accused of bombing the old car ferry "Sol Phryne" anchored off Limassol on 15 February. According to AFP, the boat had been purchased by the PLO for use as the "boat of return" which would carry Palestinian deportees on a well-publicized journey to Israel. Some reports claimed that the murdered Palestinians had been the ones who bought the ship. Initial Palestinian plans to sail from Athens had been abandoned when numerous shipping firms first agreed to lease vessels and then backed out. Following the bombing of the ship in Limassol, plans for the journey have been postponed "indefinitely."

Besides filing reports from media of the region on the "return" plans from Athens, the two explosions in Cyprus, and subsequent comment and speculation, bureau editors kept the embassy regional security officer apprised of developments in the two bombing incidents. The bombings also figured in a 23 February AG Trends article, which assessed the reaction to them among Palestinian leaders.

3. The kidnapping of Western hostages again dominated the news from Beirut in February. Three Westerners affiliated with UN organizations in Lebanon (previously immune to terrorist abductions) were seized in February. U.S. Marine Lieutenant Colonel William Richard Higgins, serving in Lebanon with the UN Truce Supervision Organization, was kidnapped on 17 February near Tyre. Intense searches throughout the remainder of the month by UNIFIL forces and the Amal Movement have failed to lead to his release. A number of organizations have claimed his abduction, with one of them, the Oppressed on Earth, claiming that he is a "CIA agent."

Earlier in the month, on 5 February, two Scandinavians working with the UN Relief and Works Agency were also kidnapped, but following their "interrogation" and "proven innocence" they were released on 1 March. With the ongoing trial of accused Lebanese terrorists in Duesseldorf, West Germans continue to be a target in Lebanon. On 11 February gunmen seized two Swedish journalists but released them two hours later when they determined that they were not Germans.

The bureau filed numerous short priority and immediate items during the month reporting kidnapping developments from various Lebanese radios and AFP.

4. Secretary of State George Shultz' shuttle to the Middle East from 25 February and continuing into March included two visits to Egypt. Intense interest in the U.S. initiative for the Middle East and its bearing on Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's own peace proposals prompted extensive filing of comment and reaction throughout the visit, mainly from Cairo media, but also from Lebanese and Palestinian sources. The Shultz trip was preceded by an AG Trends item of 10 February that noted cautious Arab reaction to the new U.S. Middle East initiative, based partly on earlier Nicosia Bureau reports.

5. Tehran television's Networks I and II moved from the 63 degree East Intelsat to the 66 degree East Intelsat on 17 February without significantly changing bureau reception of the stations. Cruising of Network II programs determined that the station does not carry live relays of the Tehran Friday prayers, thus squelching hopes for a more timely source with good reception for the prayer and sermon broadcasts. A "Weekly Political Roundtable" program was located on Network II and provided two good multi-take items. However, the program has appeared only irregularly.

6. To assist Jordan Bureau's extensive survey and reporting on the new clandestine Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio, Nicosia's sole Hebrew monitor translated Hebrew announcements carried by the radio on 5 and 7 February. The announcements were recorded at Jordan Bureau and mailed to Nicosia for processing.

7. AG produced a Trends article on 24 February about the maneuvering between Ayatollah Khomeyni and the Iranian "conservatives" over the powers of the government based on Tehran reports filed by Nicosia and London Bureaus in February and earlier.

B. Lateral Services

At the request of the American Embassy in Beirut, the bureau texted a 25,000-word interview with Commander of the Lebanese Forces Samir Ja'Ja' published in Beirut's AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI. The Beirut embassy procured the edition of the magazine, which is not on regular coverage, and sent it to the bureau for processing.

C. Technical

1. Construction began on long-wire antennas in the bureau compound. Poles were placed for the installation of seven long-wire antennas.

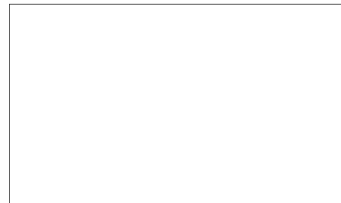
2. After receiving new DES-type radios, all staff personnel have established radio communications with the embassy and the bureau from their homes. Mobile radios have been installed in two office vehicles. A third radio is to be installed in the bureau chief's car.

III. VISITS

1. Headquarters B&F Officer [] visited Nicosia from 12 to 18 February for familiarization. STAT

2. Tel Aviv Junior Editor [] visited the bureau on 19 February during private travel to Cyprus. STAT

3. Tel Aviv Bureau Chief [] stopped in Nicosia en route to Tel Aviv following his R&R in the United States. He visited the bureau on 24 February. STAT



Bureau Chief
Nicosia Bureau

ATTACHMENT: Production Report